

The logo consists of a light green circle containing the text "trust-based philanthropy project" in white, lowercase, sans-serif font, arranged in three lines.

trust-based
philanthropy
project

From Concept to Movement

5-Year Impact Report

2020–2024



In 2020, the Trust-Based Philanthropy Project publicly launched as a peer-networking effort to promote a more equitable and relational approach to philanthropy. **The goal was simple: motivate funders to make practical changes in their grantmaking in order to alleviate harmful power dynamics and foster more impactful relationships with nonprofits.** Within months — as the world was faced with the COVID-19 pandemic and a racial reckoning — hundreds of funders turned to the Trust-Based Philanthropy Project for guidance on how to meet the moment.

Since then, the Project's reach and influence has grown exponentially. What was originally conceptualized as a five-year awareness and organizing campaign has evolved into a dynamic movement that has laid the groundwork for profound culture change across the philanthropic sector.

Through funder organizing, educational programming, and strategic communications, the Trust-Based Philanthropy Project has helped transform the sector.

TBP has gained sectorwide recognition

Trust-based philanthropy has evolved from a little-known concept to a well-regarded approach that is now recognized by funders, philanthropy-serving organizations, journalists, and thought leaders in the U.S. and worldwide.

Thousands of funders changed their behaviors

More and more funders are embracing trust-based grantmaking practices such as unrestricted funding, streamlined applications, improved transparency, and support beyond the check.

Hundreds of orgs adopted trust-based practices

Hundreds of foundations have taken steps to integrate structural and cultural changes to embed trust-based philanthropy as an expression of values geared toward justice and equity.

A new narrative has crystallized

TBP has advanced a new narrative about the importance of funders working in collaboration with nonprofits, challenging old paradigms of top-down funder-centric philanthropy.

A growing network of advocates was established

Through shared language and community-building, we have nurtured a thriving and dynamic network of thousands of practitioners who believe in the transformative power of trust-based philanthropy.



From Concept to Movement: Key Strategies for Success

In a five-year time span, the Trust-Based Philanthropy Project successfully elevated trust-based philanthropy from a concept to a movement, thanks to a few key strategies and an ethos of humility and collaboration:



Informed by nonprofits

The Project was created in response to requests and feedback from nonprofits.



Peer-to-peer organizing

Founded by funders for funders, we leaned on the power of peer organizing to build a movement.



Responsive to context

We launched when there was a growing discussion around power dynamics in philanthropy; COVID-19 and the racial reckoning underscored the need.



Actionable steps

We offered very clear steps and real-life examples for addressing systemic, seemingly abstract issues.



Story-based strategy

We promoted stories from trust-based funders, including how they operationalized it, the lessons they'd learned, and the benefits to them and their partners.



Iterative learning

We evolved and iterated our offerings based on continuous learning and assessment of our network's biggest questions, needs, priorities, and challenges.



Collaborative approach

We partnered with others in the philanthropic ecosystem that were convening funders, and supported them to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes.



Milestones Through the Years

The Whitman Institute coins the term “trust-based philanthropy” based on input from grantee partners



2014

Trust-Based Philanthropy Project strategy, purpose, and goals conceptualized



2018–
2019

Trust-Based Philanthropy Project publicly launches as a 5-year initiative



6 Principles Framework developed

Council on Foundations publishes COVID-19 Pledge promoting TBP practices. 806 foundations sign on.

2020

Mackenzie Scott announces \$5.7B in unrestricted grants; press coverage refers to her approach as “trust-based philanthropy”

Trust-based philanthropy named one of 11 trends in philanthropy



TBP in 4D framework developed

2021

Self-Reflection Tool created

Peer Exchange established



Continues on next page

Milestones Through the Years

(Continued)

2022

First public critique of trust-based philanthropy appears in Alliance Magazine

Project staff expands to meet growing demand

“Trustwashing” coined in response to rhetorical adoption of TBP

Trust-based Learning & Evaluation Framework developed

“In the Right Hands” documentary released by Trees, Water, & People

TBP article published in *The Foundation Review*

2024

“The Future of Philanthropy is Trust-Based” series published in the *Stanford Social Innovation Review*



The Project announces plans to continue, with sharpened focus on making TBP the standard of practice for effective philanthropy

2023

Demystifying TBP webinar series takes place, with record attendance

Intersection of TBP & Racial Equity framework developed

TRUST-BASED PHILANTHROPY

Long-term, systemic, culture change work rooted in a set of values and six interrelated grantmaking practices that help advance equity, shift power, and build mutually accountable relationships between funders, nonprofits, and communities.

RACIAL EQUITY WORK

The intentional and continual practice of addressing and eliminating racial disparities by changing policies, practices, systems, and structures and prioritizing measurable improvement in the lives of people of color (POC) so that race no longer dictates outcomes.

A Wide-Spanning Network

The trust-based philanthropy network is vast and diverse, with representation across the United States and territories, as well as around the world. It is composed of foundations (private, family, community, intermediary, corporate), government grantmakers, pooled funds, giving circles, individual donors, philanthropy-serving organizations, philanthropy advisors and consultants, nonprofit organizations, and philanthropy service providers from around the globe.



Network

9,771

Newsletter subscribers

1080

Peer exchange members

46

TBP Ambassadors

59

Partner Organizations

21,000+

LinkedIn Followers

Web Presence

250,000+

Total unique visitors

6,000+

Average monthly visitors

Engagement

85,000+

Downloads of web-based tools and resources

20,000+

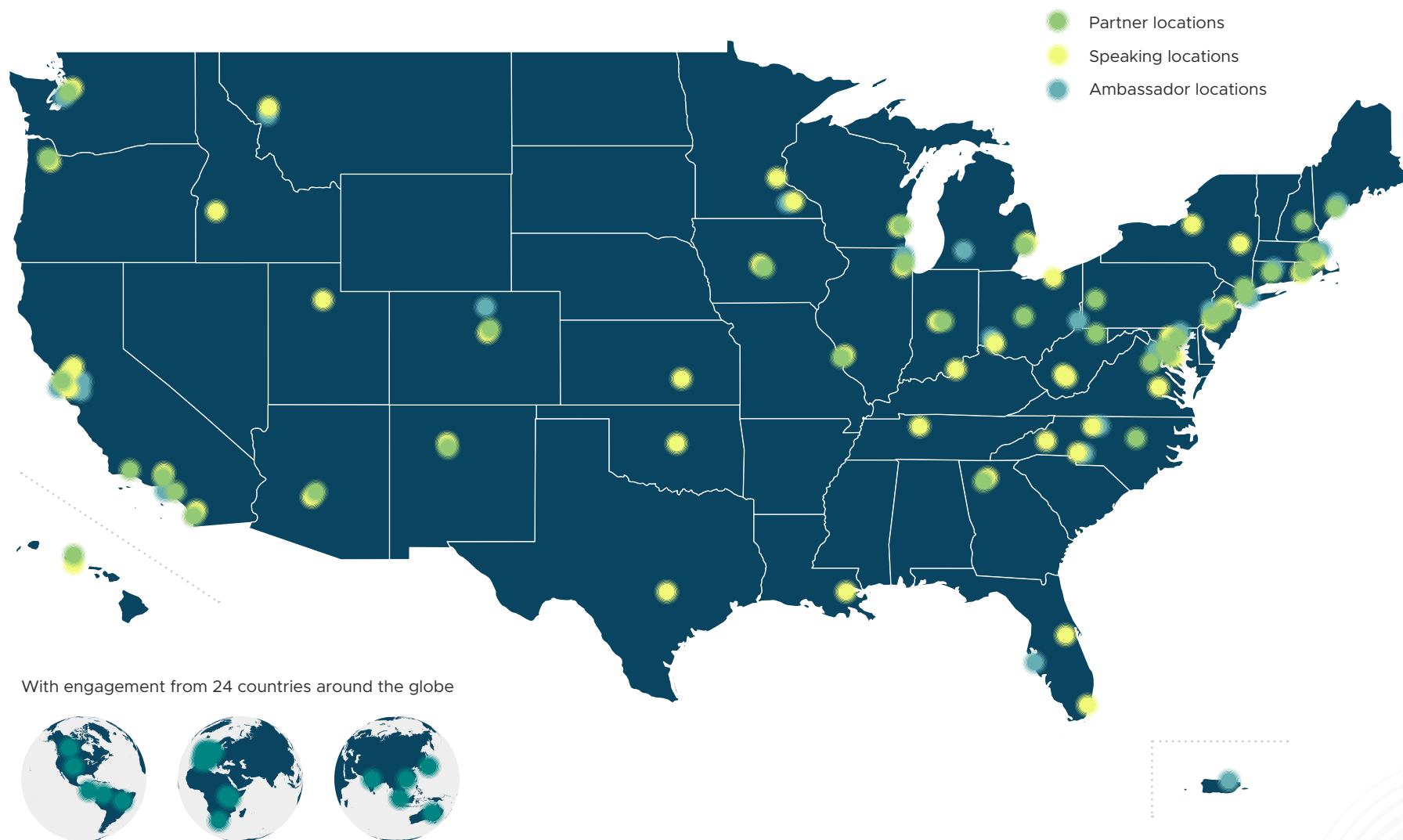
Total # views of videos and recordings

350

Average registrants for key programs

Widespread Reach

The trust-based philanthropy movement has been cemented across the U.S., with growing interest internationally.



A Wealth of Learning Opportunities

Over the years, the Trust-Based Philanthropy Project has offered learning opportunities for funders at different points in the journey.

Educational Programs

46

TBPP-hosted webinars

77

appearances on partner-hosted webinars

48

in-person conference workshops

15

conference plenary sessions

72

private presentations for foundation boards and staff

32

sustaining partnerships with PSOs

5

cohort learning opportunities

Tools & Resources

22

how-to guides offering practical guidance on operationalizing trust-based philanthropy

10

podcasts featuring TBP experts sharing lessons and concepts

9

templates & samples from trust-based funders, including job descriptions, grant agreements, grant applications, and evaluation frameworks

2

videos, including an animated video and a mini-documentary

138

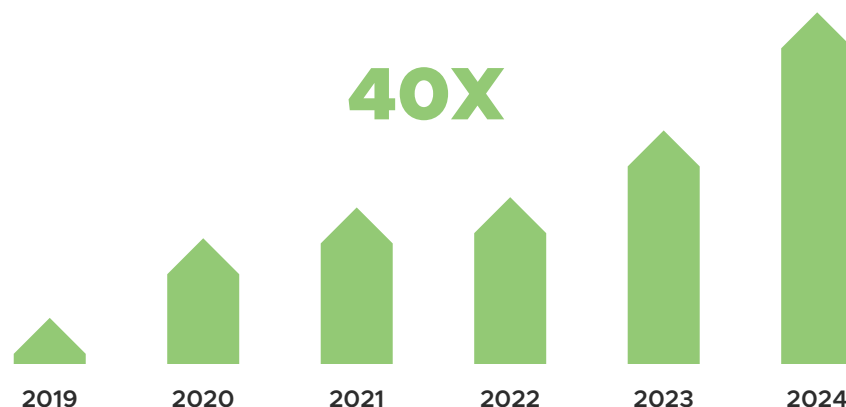
blog posts promoting learnings, reflections, and analysis from trust-based practitioners



Increases in Awareness & Adoption

Sectorwide Recognition

Since our inception in 2020, trust-based philanthropy has gone from a little-known concept to a frequently referenced term in the sector. Between 2019 and 2024, web-based mentions of "trust-based philanthropy" grew 40X.



Increased Advocacy & Engagement

Between 2023 and 2024, the number of funders that self-identify as "champions" or "supporters" of trust-based philanthropy nearly doubled.



Practice Shift

Our 2024 survey of nearly 600 grantmakers revealed significant shifts in practice since 2020:

70%

introduced or increased unrestricted grants

71%

simplified reporting requirements

74%

streamlined applications

77%

instituted support beyond the check

Data about practice shift and increased engagement has been pulled from Trust-Based Philanthropy Project surveys; it is not necessarily representative of the entire philanthropy sector. Download the full survey reports at www.trustbasedphilanthropy.org.

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Philanthropy-Serving Organization Partners

Arizona Impact for Good
Blue Sky Funders Forum
Candid
Catalyst of San Diego & Imperial Counties
Center for Effective Philanthropy
Center for Evaluation Innovation
Community Foundation Opportunity Network
Connecticut Council for Philanthropy
Council on Michigan Foundations
Environmental Grantmakers Association
Exponent Philanthropy

Forefront Illinois
Grantmakers Council of Rhode Island
Grantmakers in Aging
Grantmakers in the Arts
Grantmakers for Effective Organizations
Grantmakers in Health
Grantmakers of Oregon & Southwest Washington
Grantmakers of Western Pennsylvania
Groundworks New Mexico
Health and Environmental Funders
Indiana Philanthropy Alliance
Iowa Council on Foundations

Jewish Funders Network
Maine Philanthropy Network
Maryland Philanthropy Network
National Center for Family Philanthropy
New Hampshire Funders Forum
New Jersey Council of Grantmakers
North Carolina Network of Grantmakers
Northern California Grantmakers
Orange County Grantmakers
Participatory Grantmaking Community
PEAK Grantmaking
Philanthropy Colorado

Philanthropy Massachusetts
Philanthropy Missouri
Philanthropy Northwest
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